

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 04482 141427Z
ACTION EUR-12

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O R 141203Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO USINFO IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6911

UNCLAS BELGRADE 4482

USICA

FOR PGM/RC, VOA/PCX

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- SOVIET PROPOSAL AT MBFR TALKS

1. JUNE 14 'VECERNJI LIST' CARRIES COMMENTARY ON RECENT
SOVIET PROPOSAL AT MBFR TALKS IN VIENNA. NOTING THAT
THIS IF FIRST TIME MOSCOW HAS ACCEPTED THE WESTERN VIEW
OF THE NEED FOR ACHIEVING BALANCED NUMBERS, WRITER GOES ON
TO PORTRAY THIS AS "A STEP FORWARD BASED ON SOVIET INITIA-
TIVE."

2. "THE PUBLIC IS NOW INTERESTED IN THE PROCEDURE,
ESPECIALLY IF THE WEST ACCEPTS THE SOVIET PROPOSAL. SO
FAR WESTERN OFFICIALS HAVE NOTED THAT THE PROPOSAL IS
'WORTHY OF ATTENTION'. SHOULD THERE BE AN AGREEMENT, IT
SEEMS THAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO DECREASE (NUMBER OF
TROOPS). HOWEVER, WE MUST AWAIT DETAILS BECAUSE, UNTIL
NOW, THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE PUBLISHED ABOUT THE
SOVIET PROPOSAL AND FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSIONS. AT THE
MOMENT, THE PREVAILING MOOD IS ONE OF SURPRISE, AND
THERE IS SPECULATION ABOUT THE IMPETUS AND REAL
MOTIVE FOR THIS SURPRISING SOVIET INITIATIVE WHICH
MUST HAVE SOME CONNECTION WITH THE OBVIOUS CRISIS OF
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DETENTE. MOSCOW DID NOT MAKE THIS SIGNIFICANT
CONCESSION IN VIENNA AT THIS MOMENT SIMPLY BY
CHANCE."
CATHERMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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